

1 AN ACT in relation to veterans.

2 Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,  
3 represented in the General Assembly:

4 Section 5. The Department of Veterans Affairs Act is  
5 amended by adding Section 15 as follows:

6 (20 ILCS 2805/15 new)

7 Sec. 15. Reimbursements to veterans service  
8 organizations.

9 (a) In this Section:

10 "Veterans service officer" means an individual employed  
11 by a veterans service organization and accredited by the  
12 United States Department of Veterans Affairs to process and  
13 adjudicate claims and other benefits for veterans and their  
14 spouses and beneficiaries.

15 "Veterans service organization" means an organization  
16 that meets all of the following criteria:

17 (1) It is formed by and for United States military  
18 veterans.

19 (2) It is chartered by the United States Congress  
20 and incorporated in the State of Illinois.

21 (3) It maintains at least one office in this State  
22 staffed by a veterans service officer.

23 "Veterans services" means the processing and adjudication  
24 of the following claims and other benefits for veterans and  
25 their spouses and beneficiaries:

26 (1) Disability compensation benefits.

27 (2) Disability pension benefits.

28 (3) Dependents' indemnity compensation.

29 (4) Widow's death pension.

30 (5) Burial benefits.

31 (6) Confirmed and continued claims.

1           (7) Vocational rehabilitation and education.

2           (8) Waivers of indebtedness.

3           (9) Miscellaneous.

4           (b) The Department shall reimburse a veterans service  
5 organization for veterans services rendered on behalf of  
6 veterans and their spouses and beneficiaries by a veterans  
7 service officer employed by the organization. The  
8 reimbursement shall be computed at the rate of \$0.005 for  
9 each dollar of benefits obtained for veterans or their  
10 spouses or beneficiaries residing in Illinois as a result of  
11 the efforts of the veterans service officer. There shall be  
12 no reimbursement under this Section for the value of health  
13 care received in a health care facility under the  
14 jurisdiction of the United States Veterans Administration.

15           (c) To be eligible for reimbursement under this Section,  
16 a veterans service organization must document the amount of  
17 moneys obtained for veterans and their spouses and  
18 beneficiaries in the form and manner required by the  
19 Department. The documentation must include the submission to  
20 the Department of a copy of the organization's report or  
21 reports to the United States Department of Veterans Affairs  
22 stating the amount of moneys obtained by the organization for  
23 veterans and their spouses and beneficiaries in the State  
24 fiscal year for which reimbursement under this Section is  
25 requested. The organization must submit the copy of the  
26 report or reports to the Department no later than July 31  
27 following the end of the State fiscal year for which  
28 reimbursement is requested.

29           (d) The Department shall pay the reimbursement under  
30 this Section to a veterans service organization in a single  
31 annual payment for each State fiscal year, beginning with the  
32 State fiscal year that begins on July 1, 2003. The Department  
33 must make the payment for a State fiscal year on or before  
34 December 31 of the succeeding State fiscal year.

1       (e) A veterans service organization shall use  
2       reimbursement moneys received under this Section only for the  
3       purpose of paying the salary and expenses of one or more  
4       veterans service officers and the organization's related  
5       expenses incurred in employing the officer or officers for  
6       the processing and adjudication of claims and other benefits  
7       for veterans and their spouses and beneficiaries.

8       Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon  
9       becoming law.